

## UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

## Videoconference Minutes

Monday, March 1, 2021

**Attending:** Daniel Potter, Chair (UCD), Mary Lynch, Vice Chair (UCSF), Dana Carney (UCB), Katheryn Russ (UCD), Tony Smith (UCI), Megan McEvoy (UCLA), Matthew Hibbing (UCM), Juliann Allison (UCR), Geoffrey Cook (UCSD), Jose Gurrola (UCSF), Mary Brenner (UCSB), Tracy Larrabee (UCSC), Zoe Hayes (Undergraduate Student Representative), Todd Greenspan (Director, Academic Planning), Ethan Savage (Analyst, Academic Planning), Shawn Brick (Executive Director, Student Financial Support), Mary Gauvain (Chair, Academic Senate), Robert Horwitz (Vice Chair, Academic Senate), Brenda Abrams (Principal Policy Analyst, Academic Senate)

**I. Consultation with the Academic Senate Office**

- *Mary Gauvain, Chair, Academic Senate*
- *Robert Horwitz, Vice Chair, Academic Senate*

The governor's preliminary budget has been revised and the initial cuts to UC have been restored but line items that infringe on the Senate's authority remain. The vaccine rollout and the fall reopening of campuses are interconnected. and the vaccine rollout is complicated in part due to the emerging variants. Chair Gauvain has asked divisional Senate chairs to collect information about preparations for reopening. Scenarios for reopening differ by campus and there is no clarity about what the courses, student and faculty experiences, and research will look like. UC has not made a decision about mandating the vaccine and a mandate could result in litigation.

Academic Council recently discussed the results of the systemwide review of the report on the restructuring of the Innovative Learning Technology Initiative (ILTI). The feedback from the systemwide committees and campuses included recommendations to eliminate ILTI or to send ILTI funds directly to campuses. It is unlikely that the Initiative will be disbanded, but the Senate's perspective regarding what would be most useful to faculty and how ILTI resources might be best utilized will be helpful to UCOP. Making a specialized course available to students across the system is valuable, but ILTI should be responsive to issues such as impacted majors and time to degree.

The 2019 controversy about UC affiliations with religious hospitals has reemerged. The affiliations and the issue of comprehensive access will be a discussion item on the May Regents agenda. The Senate is deliberating whether the position taken in 2019 should be reaffirmed given that revisions have been made to UC's proposed contract with Dignity Health. The second meeting of President Drake's symposia on policing is scheduled for early March and the goal is to stimulate discussion about best practices for policing on campuses. Another topic under discussion by Council is the legal authority of the president and the chancellors to utilize curtailment without the Regents declaring that there are extraordinary economic circumstances.

**Discussion:** UCSC has been advised by its local Public Health Department that it can reopen with classrooms at 50% occupancy and two-thirds occupancy for dorm rooms, and the campus has ruled that all classes over 100 students must be taught remotely but there is concern that UCOP will overrule these plans. Chair Gauvain explained that administrators at UCOP understand that each campus is subject to public health restrictions, which will dictate how it will reopen. The goal is that each campus will have some in-person classes but what this means will depend upon the local environment. Members of UCEP should be in contact with their divisional Council chairs who can share updates with systemwide Senate leadership. There is a concern that faculty will be required

to juggle remote and in-person classes which will be a workload issue. It was also noted that UC cannot mandate a vaccine that has only been approved on an emergency basis.

Vice Chair Lynch commented on the importance of advocating for support for students who are vulnerable and needing support. In-person instruction makes it easier for at-risk students to approach their instructors for help. Chair Gauvain acknowledged the challenges students are dealing with, but noted that faculty are under duress as well and no one is speaking up on their behalf. Faculty also need to be equipped with the appropriate tools to help students navigate what they are experiencing. The undergraduate student representative indicated that international and out of state students need access to inexpensive campus housing. Chair Gauvain will mention the housing issue to the systemwide Committee on International Education and can also bring this matter to the attention of the Graduate, Undergraduate and Equity Affairs office at UCOP.

## **II. Commencement of Academic Activity**

- *Shawn Brick, Executive Director, Student Financial Support, UCOP*

Director Brick joined UCEP to raise awareness among faculty of a federal compliance issue involving the whole campus, including registrars and financial aid offices. The Federal Department of Education has begun enforcing a long-standing policy related to program reviews which involves a comprehensive in-person audit. The Department of Education is demanding that colleges and universities demonstrate proof that students began the classes for which they received financial aid. For example, a student may intend to enroll but then decide against attending without informing the campus, and the registrar does not become aware of this until the very end of the term, when all absences for courses are reported. The Department has made it clear that UC cannot wait until the end of the term to figure out who was not attending and instead report earlier in the term that students have begun their coursework. Faculty will not be required to take attendance but UC must provide documentation by the third week of the course.

Both Davis and Merced were found to be out of compliance with this policy during their program reviews. Several years ago, UCD developed a process where students log into a system to confirm they have enrolled in classes, whereas UCM does not want to rely on students to self-certify. The other UC campuses are exploring ways to enable students to confirm their class participation, and feedback from faculty is being incorporated in the plans. At UCD, students have to first read the academic code of conduct when they log into the system and UCM faculty want to be able to drop students from courses. At Merced, whenever a student interacts with a course in the Canvas learning management system it will be recorded. This is designed to reduce the burden on faculty and faculty who do not use Canvas will be given an alternative. The campus financial aid office will follow up on any students for whom there is no record of attendance. UCOP will not dictate that campuses implement any particular type of solution. Director Brick indicated that faculty are likely to soon hear from their registrars or financial aid offices about developing plans to meet this federal requirement. Campuses have until the end of June to submit their plans to UCOP.

**Discussion:** The auditors found that, in the past, if students received all F grades, the registrars would contact the student in order to confirm their last date of attendance. If attendance could not be confirmed, UC considered students to have taken 50% of the course thereby earning half of the financial aid for the term. But from the Federal government's perspective, this is taxpayer money made available for an activity that UC cannot confirm has occurred. This is not something UC students would probably try to intentionally "game the system," but it could occur if in good faith students plan to start the term but then unexpectedly leave UC for some reason. The cost of compliance will outweigh the taxpayer money that is lost. Campuses may want to do a cost benefit analysis to help determine how to implement a compliance process.

### III. Consent Calendar

**Action:** UCEP's February 1<sup>st</sup> videoconference minutes were approved.

### IV. Consultation with Institutional Research & Academic Planning

- *Todd Greenspan, Director, Academic Planning, IRAP*
- *Ethan Savage, Analyst, Academic Planning, IRAP*

This month's Regents' Academic and Student Affairs Committee agenda includes a presentation on curricular innovations and enhancements to address equity gaps, with at least one example from every campus. The presenters will be Linda Adler Kassner from UCSB and Marco Molinaro from UCD. Enrollment is holding steady right now, but campuses still need to be conservative about the number of offers made. The legislature may call for enrollment growth while continuing to not fund over-enrollment. The undergraduate deans are focusing on the return to campus as well as plans for spring and summer session commencements. The five conditions in the governor's preliminary budget for 2021-2022 are: 1) holding resident tuition flat for this year; 2) eliminating equity gaps by 2025; 3) increasing online offerings by 10%; 4) better alignment of student learning objectives with workforce needs; and, 5) developing a dual admissions pathway for first time CCC freshmen to receive guaranteed admission to UC.

**Discussion:** It is not clear if the increase in online offerings refers to the number of courses or the number of students in online courses. The definition of an online course is inconsistent across the campuses, so a standard system for reporting the mode of instruction may be needed. The State has provided California State University system with funding to eliminate equity gaps and the Legislature is looking at something similar for UC.

### V. Systemwide Senate Review: Proposed Revisions to the Universitywide Police Policies and Administrative Procedures

UCEP has the opportunity to opine on the proposed revisions to the University Police Policies and Administrative Procedures. Comments are due April 21<sup>st</sup>.

**Discussion:** Several members took the position that this policy is well outside of UCEP's purview and commenting on it will dilute the committee's authority, especially since members have no expertise in this area. The analyst suggested that it is appropriate for UCEP to weigh in on the issue of student safety and policing on campus. A member described interacting with police to help individual students over the years, and would like to acknowledge the positive changes being made to police practices and support a reorganization that will work for students, faculty, and staff at UC. It is important to have a general discussion about the role of police on campus and how they can help students, but the specific policies in this report should be left to experts. A member in favor of fewer guns on campus noted that the policy will allow retired officers to carry concealed weapons on campus, which seems problematic. The ways the different campuses interact with their campus police vary dramatically but UCEP could promote the principle that there should be inclusive discussions to ensure that everyone feels heard and that they have a voice in campus safety. Some members worried about how UCEP's silence on this matter could be interpreted. Chair Potter recommended that a potential response to the proposed policies could be drafted for the committee's review.

**Action:** The UCSC and UCB representatives will prepare a draft memo for the committee's review.

### VI. The 2020-2025 Five-Year Planning Perspectives Report

- *Chris Procello, Ph.D., Academic Planning and Research Analyst, IRAP*

UCEP has been invited to comment on the 2020-2025 Five-Year Planning Perspectives report and any feedback is due by June 1<sup>st</sup>. Analyst Procello in IRAP is responsible for analyzing the Planning Perspectives which are lists of the academic programs the campuses are thinking about creating. Since 2004 the total number of planning items has increased from just over 250 to 490. The majority of these planning items have to do with program establishments, and the rest include transfers and consolidations. Program establishments increased from 250 items in 2004 to 299 in 2021, and about 75% of establishments were graduate programs and 25% were undergraduate programs. UCLA and UCB have accounted for about half of the planning establishment items over time followed by UCI and UCSD.

In the most recent Perspectives, the established programs have been in interdisciplinary studies, health professions engineering, and biological and biomedical sciences. The interdisciplinary category includes cognitive sciences, computational social sciences, data science, law and medicine, and medical humanities. Seven campuses have proposed a total of 28 computational and data science programs spanning from undergraduate to doctoral and professional programs. For the first time, in this cycle campuses were asked to indicate if the programs will be partially or completely online, and campuses reported that 15% of the programs will be partially or completely online, almost all of which are graduate programs. The Perspectives include plans for five college and school establishments at UCB, UCI, and UCSD.

Analyst Procello described the trends in plans for graduate academic programs, graduate professional programs and undergraduate programs since 2004. Academic doctorate and professional masters programs have driven a good deal of the growth in program establishments. The plans for undergraduate programs are primarily in engineering, biological and biomedical sciences, ethnic culture, and gender and group studies, mostly at UCB and UCLA. Campuses are also asked to report on actions like transferring, disestablishing, and discontinuing programs. Since 2004, about a third of the discontinuations were undergraduate programs and a quarter of the discontinuations reported in the most recent cycle are undergraduate programs. Other than establishments, discontinuations have continued to be the most prevalent action for undergraduate programs. Analyst Procello clarified that discontinuation is eliminating an academic program whereas disestablishment is eliminating an academic or research unit. Since comments on this report are not due until June, UCEP will discuss this matter again in April.

**Discussion:** There are concerns about what the expansion of the professional masters programs means for undergraduate programs. During the course of reviewing undergraduate programs at UCD, there did not appear to be obvious synergies between the professional masters programs and the undergraduate programs unlike there is with doctoral programs. Instead, the professional masters programs seem to be competing for resources like lab space or professors who also teach classes with a mix of undergraduate and masters students. Campus administrators have financial incentives to set up the professional masters programs, but there may not be any principles about insulating resources for undergraduate instruction when these programs grow.

A member questioned why proposed program establishments are of interest since some of them are never actually established. Director Greenspan acknowledged that the Planning Perspectives may be more relevant to the Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs (CCGA) than to UCEP. The idea is to have some process where the campuses are compelled to look at what is occurring across the system in an effort to minimize duplication but to also prompt campuses to think about their program needs. The Perspectives demonstrate a campus's investment in and commitment to developing a program.

The committee discussed questions related to the financial aspects of self-supporting programs (SSPs) including: 1) if they generate sufficient revenues to cover program costs; 2) if revenue covers all program overhead so no funds are diverted away from undergraduate instruction; and, 3) if revenue goes back into the program and not to the College or elsewhere on campus. An overarching concern is ensuring that instructional resources available for the undergraduate programs are protected. Director Greenspan reported that UCOP is primarily focused on making sure that no State funds are used for the SSPs, but CCGA and the Committee on Planning and Budget each have self-supporting subcommittees scrutinizing the financial issues. Chair Potter will contact the chairs of these committees and invite someone to join UCEP next month.

## **VII. Learning Outcomes Assessment**

Chair Potter reported recently hearing about the amount of effort faculty and staff are putting into learning outcomes assessment for programs and courses, and there is some skepticism about the value of this effort. This has been a topic of discussion at UCD for several years and the Chair's own department is focusing on learning outcomes assessment because it is due for a program review next year. There is a diverse range of opinions about how to conduct program learning outcomes assessment in a meaningful way, how much energy should be put into it, and whether this work is being done simply to please administrators or if it has real value. Chair Potter does not think UCEP needs to comment on learning outcomes assessment or that a systemwide policy is necessary, but encouraged committee members to share their thoughts.

**Discussion:** UCSF recently had its review by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and it was set up specific for the learning outcomes assessment process. This took a good deal of time and a substantial number of faculty were involved. The program review was successful but what will happen with the information prepared for the review is unclear. A member indicated that the divisional Committee on Educational Policy is not involved with the WASC accreditation process, so it does not seem that UCEP should spend time on this issue. The committee discussed the pressure on faculty to embrace certain best practices that do not accommodate the variability across campuses. Often within one campus, the degree to which faculty are aware of learning outcomes assessment varies greatly.

Members also noted that campus expertise on assessment is concentrated in Teaching and Learning centers, which are part of the administration. While it is beneficial to have administrative support, assessment is the sole purview of the faculty teaching the course. The assessments also offer an alternative to subjective course evaluations by students of the faculty. Several members agreed that more administrators than faculty seem to be involved with learning outcomes assessment on their campuses. One recommendation is that faculty should research what the best practices for assessment are. Another recommendation is for department chairs to have meetings to discuss quantitative reports to more actively engage faculty and generate new ideas about assessment

## **VIII. New Business**

There was no New Business.

## **IX. Executive Session**

There was no Executive Session.

Videoconference adjourned at: 12:20 PM

Minutes prepared by: Brenda Abrams

Attest: Dan Potter